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SUBJECT: Ambassador Shannon's Meeting with MOD Jobim

CLASSIFIED BY: Thomas Shannon, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(D)

¶1. (C) 1. (C) During Ambassador Shannon's introductory call February 5, Minister of Defense Nelson Jobim described the overall bilateral security relationship as strong and transparent. He said he favored expanding it this year, first through a Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA), then through an information security agreement. He hopes to sign the DCA during his proposed February 23 visit to Washington, if the Ministry for Foreign Affairs approves in time.

¶2. (C) Jobim praised the U.S.-Brazil partnership in Haiti, particularly the strong working relationship of Generals Keen and Peixoto. He described his visit to Haiti two weeks earlier and called the situation "extremely fragile." Jobim derided concerns expressed by Venezuela of a "U.S. invasion" of Haiti, saying that the proximity of the United States and its capacity to move large amounts of material made it natural for the USG to play a leading role in relief efforts. Given the extent of U.S. and Brazilian operations, Jobim thought there would be potential for exchanges of lessons learned. He underlined the importance of the UN approaching Haiti's future from the point of view of "constructing" the country rather than simply providing security and said that MINUSTAH will need an improved UNSC mandate to be effective in this role. According to Jobim, Brazil will be making further investments in Haiti's future, projects which Ambassador Shannon noted will present additional opportunities for cooperation.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Shannon said that he had seen President Lula's (and Jobim's) denial that there was a final decision in the FX2 competition. While the sale has been conducted as a commercial transaction, its significance for the bilateral relationship should not be overlooked. The unprecedented decisions regarding the transfer of U.S. technology in support of the Super Hornet show the high level of confidence the USG places in its partnership with Brazil. Brazil, as it makes a decision, should try to consolidate and protect this important advance.

¶4. (C) The MOD gave a summary of security issues in the South America region, stressing the importance of building regional institutions to reduce the risks of conflict. Jobim spoke of his efforts to ameliorate tensions between Colombia and Ecuador following the 2008 bombing of a FARC facility inside Ecuador by Colombian forces. Contacts between Defense Ministers, through the South American Defense Council (SADC), he said, had been key to managing the after effects of the strike, providing a good test case for the SADC. Jobim told Ambassador Shannon that Brazil has offered to help monitor the Colombia-Ecuador border as a confidence building measure. He was less optimistic about Brazil's ability to manage Venezuela and expressed concern about Chavez's increasingly

complicated domestic situation. He worried aloud about the impact in Venezuela if Chavez resorted to violent repression of demonstrators.

SHANNON